

DISPOSING OF UNUSABLE PAINT

- ◆ Containers of latex paint less than 1/4 full: Set can outside and crack open the lids to allow moisture to evaporate and excess paint to harden. The hardened material can be discarded with your trash. Remove lids so refuse haulers can see the paint is hardened.
- ◆ Containers of latex paint 1/4 full or more: In a well-ventilated place, paint old newspaper, cardboard, wood, or carpet to use up the paint. When painted material is dry, dispose of it in the trash.
- ◆ Large amounts of latex paint: In a well-ventilated place, pour a 1" layer of paint into a plastic-lined box. Let the layer dry, then repeat the process until the container is empty. Water-based paint can also be combined with an absorbent such as clay-based cat litter or vermiculite in a plastic-lined box. When the material is dry, place it in a trash bag, seal, and discard in trash.
- ◆ Do **not** pour liquid paint down the drain, on the ground, or put in the trash. Improper disposal may contaminate ground and surface water supplies.
- ◆ Paints manufactured prior to 1978 may contain high levels of lead. Bring these paints to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection. Contact the Health Department for Collection dates and locations.
- ◆ Oil-based paints and other paint-related products, including wood preservatives and roofing tars, should **not** be disposed of in the trash. Bring these items to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection for proper disposal. Contact the Lincoln-Lancaster Health Department for Collection dates and locations.

When recycling paint products or preparing them for disposal, work in a ventilated area, away from children, pets, flames, direct heat, and food or water storage areas.

Additional information can be obtained from the Lincoln-Lancaster Health Department, Environmental Public Health Division at (402) 441-8040.

Thank You for Preventing Pollution!

Places That Might Want Leftover Paint

Please call any organization listed below to verify whether it still accepts paint from the public *before* you take paint to it. Only latex paint is accepted.

Indian Center

438-5231

(White interior, other interior colors sometimes accepted)

Lincoln East Theater Department

436-1302

(Flat latex only)

Lincoln Northeast Theater Department

436-1303

Lincoln Southeast Theater Department

436-1304

(Latex interior only)

Some Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) Middle Schools might take paint. Call the LPS main office (436-1000) or a local middle school for more information.



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Reusing, Recycling, and Disposing of PAINT



Lincoln-Lancaster County
Health Department
3140 N Street
Lincoln, NE 68510-1514

<http://www.ci.lincoln.ne.us/city/health/envIRON/pollu/>

MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR LEFTOVER PAINT AND PAINT RELATED MATERIALS

PAINT IS A COMMON PRODUCT THAT CAN BECOME HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE WHEN NOT USED UP.

THIS FACT SHEET WAS DEVELOPED TO PROVIDE YOU WITH SUGGESTIONS FOR HANDLING LEFTOVER PAINT.

USING AND STORING

It is easy to use and store paint properly if you:

- ◆ Estimate how much paint you need and buy only that amount;
- ◆ Buy water-based paint* rather than oil-based paint—it is safer to use and dispose of;
- ◆ Always be sure to read and follow instructions on the label;
- ◆ **Never** use exterior paint indoors;
- ◆ When painting interior surfaces, ventilate area per the label instructions—contact a distributor for further information;
- ◆ **Never** use industrial paints for residential purposes; and
- ◆ Store paint in a cool, dry place away from heat or sparks with lids firmly sealed and cans turned upside down.

* **Latex paints** are also referred to as *vinyl, acrylic, or water-based* paints. **Solvent-based paints** are also referred to as *alkyd, oil-based, polyurethane, or varnish* paint. If a paint is water-based, it is soluble in water. To test solubility, place a small amount of the paint in a jar with water. If the paint becomes thinner, it is water-based. If the paint remains in a glob or beads, it is oil-based.

CLEANING UP

Water-Based Paint (Latex) *

Used paint trays and brushes should be wiped as clean as possible with a paper towel or rag. Dry the paint-covered paper towels or rags before putting them in the trash.

The paint trays and brushes can then be cleaned in a sink. If your sink is connected to a septic tank or lagoon, use an ample quantity of water to dilute the paint thoroughly. Do not clean equipment outside on the ground; it will pollute local streams, lakes, and ground water.

Solvent-Based Paint (Oil) *

Use only an approved paint solvent such as thinner or turpentine. Clean all brushes and other equipment far away from sparks, flame, or high heat (such as an electric paint stripper). Clean brushes and tools in a well-ventilated area. Keep the used paint solvent in a closed, labeled container and store it in a safe place. Wait for particles to settle to the bottom and then pour clean solvent into another container for reuse. The leftover particles can be dried out and disposed of in the trash.

REUSING PAINT

Leftover paint is usable if:

- ◆ It has not been repeatedly frozen and thawed;
- ◆ It fills at least one-third of its container;
- ◆ It is in its original can with label intact;
- ◆ It mixes when stirred; and
- ◆ Lumps do **not** appear when it is painted onto a sheet of newspaper.

RECYCLING USABLE PAINT

Recycle usable latex paint by separating interior from exterior types. Similar colors can then be combined. To make a good primer, different colors can be blended to create a shade ranging from beige to dark gray.

RECYCLING PAINT THINNER

Pour used turpentine or brush cleaner into a clear container with a tight-fitting lid. Label the container *paint thinner* or *poison* and store on a high shelf, out of the reach of children. Allow the paint particles to settle (this process may take several weeks). Pour off the clear liquid into a container with a child-proof lid for reuse. Let the remaining residue dry completely in a well-ventilated area away from sparks or flames and discard in the trash.